

Structure vocabulary for IELTS essays

What kind of vocabulary is needed in an IELTS essay?

One form of vocabulary needed in IELTS is the language to structure your essay and make it coherent. This vocabulary is not specific to the topic of the question, but can be recycled from essay to essay with appropriate changes.

Where can you find this vocabulary?

There is a list further down this page, you could also find more by reading [sample essays](#) and noting down useful phrases.

Should you just learn these phrases?

That depends. If you are looking for a "quick fix" to get a result asap, it is one possible approach. However, that may not work. If your general English is of a lower standard, the examiner is likely to realise that these are "learnt" phrases and you may not get credit for them.

If you have more time to prepare, I have another suggestion. **Adopt and adapt**. This means:

- you choose a few of these phrases - not all of them
- you see how they work by trying them in your own essays
- you adapt them to your writing

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Impersonal points of view

These are useful both in the introduction for restating the question and in the main body for introducing the main arguments in an impersonal way.

Impersonal points of view - making an impersonal argument
There are those who say that
It is often said that
Many commentators are of the view that
A common opinion is that
A popular belief is that
It is often said that
One argument put forward is that
It can be argued that
It is generally accepted that

Personal opinions

These phrases for expressing personal opinions are particularly useful in conclusions, where you are much more likely to be personal. They are also of use in the introductions in opinion based essays.

Personal opinions
My personal view is that
It seems to me that
I tend to believe that
I am of the opinion that
I would argue that
In my experience

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Commenting

A second category of opinion language is showing the strength of your opinion. This language can be used either with [personal opinions](#) or [more impersonal opinions](#).

Commenting
Of course,
Naturally,
Evidently,

Generalising - making your writing look academic and more cautious

Part of the academic process - and IELTS is at least partly academic - is to generalise appropriately. This language is needed to soften statements which would be too strong.

Generally speaking,
On the whole,
.....tends.....
Typically,
By and large
.....tends.....
..may/might/could.....
Often/frequently/sometimes/usually

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Explaining opinions

Sometimes it is sensible to restate an opinion with a further explanation. This is particularly relevant in the main body of an essay when you have introduced a complex point or argument.

Explaining opinions
What this means is
In other words,
That is to say
To be more precise
In fact,

Using examples to explain

The language of examples is highly relevant in IELTS essays as it allows you to explain with real life examples abstract ideas. The rubric of the essay almost always includes the words *"support your arguments with examples and relevant evidence"*.

Explaining through examples and introducing evidence
For example,
For instance,
A good illustration of this is
If we take an example
Evidence for this is provided by
We can see this when

Explaining cause and stating effect

The language of cause and effect is another way to expand on your main points. Equally, you can use the language of "reason" to say why.

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One reason for this is
The immediate cause of this
One of the causes of this is
This has resulted in
As a result,
This has led to

Concluding

Evidently, this language is needed in the conclusion of the essay.

Concluding
To summarise
In conclusion
On balance,
This is a complex issue with no clear answers
If we look at both sides of the argument